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# **News Release**

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## **2 Wahkon men indicted for growing 428 marijuana plants on public land**

A federal grand jury has returned an indictment against two Wahkon, Minnesota, men for allegedly growing 428 marijuana plants on land owned by Aitkin County. In an indictment filed with the court earlier this week, Nathan Daniel Bassett, 34, and his brother, Tytus Ahtushmit Bassett, 31, were charged with one count of conspiracy to manufacture and possess with intent to distribute marijuana, one count of possession with intent to distribute marijuana, and one count of maintenance of drug-involved premises.

The indictment alleges the brothers knowingly and intentionally maintained a marijuana grow operation between the spring and fall of 2009. The land they used for that purpose is located in southeastern Aitkin County and administered by the County's land department. The brothers were arrested on September 17 at the grow site.

If convicted, the defendants face a potential maximum penalty of 40 years in prison on the conspiracy and possession counts and 20 years on the maintenance count. All sentences are determined by a federal district court judge.

This case is the result of an investigation by the Aitkin County Sheriff's Office, the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, the Mille Lacs County Sheriff's Office, and the North Central Drug Task Force. It is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Chris Wolfe.

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An indictment is a determination by a grand jury that there is probable cause to believe that offenses have been committed by a defendant. A defendant, of course, is presumed innocent until he or she pleads guilty or is proven guilty at trial.